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News Release

USU Receives Multi-Million Dollar Cystic Fibrosis Research Award

BETHESDA, Md. – The Uniformed Services University's Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics was recently awarded a $12-plus-million, seven-year contract by the National Institutes of Health to study the proteomics of cystic fibrosis.

Harvey B. Pollard, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chair of the APG Department, is the principal investigator for the project, the goal of which is to identify proteins whose expression and function is significantly increased or decreased in cystic fibrosis. "Identification of such proteins will provide information crucial for the development of new clinical diagnostics and the discovery of new drugs to treat cystic fibrosis," explained Pollard.

Faculty co-investigators and consultants at USU include Greg Mueller, Ph.D.; David Jacobowitz, Ph.D.; Meera Srivastava, Ph.D.; and Ofer Eidelman, Ph.D.; of the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics; as well as Tom Darling, M.D., Ph.D., APG and Dermatology departments; and Lee Metcalf, Ph.D., Department of Microbiology and Immunology. The Center for Medical Genomics and Proteomics is the armature for this program, featuring a world-class mass spectrometry facility located in USU's Biological Instrumentation Center.

Cystic fibrosis is the most common autosomal recessive lethal genetic disease affecting the U.S. population, with one out of every 1,600 live births afflicted. A cystic fibrosis patient carries two copies of a mutant cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator gene, and about 5 percent of the population carries at least one mutant CFTR gene. The average cystic fibrosis patient dies at age 28, primarily through lung inflammation, infection and failure.

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